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ABSTRACT

This survey attempts to verify and delineate the trends in intramural physical education. Surveys were mailed to 395 colleges and universities in November of 1975. Two hundred and thirty three (56.6%) were returned for statistical analysis, but the number of responses to questions varied because not all questions were applicable to every institution. The survey substantiates previous findings which indicate that funding for intramural programs comes primarily from student-related resources, that most institutions provide structured intramural and recreation programs, that most institutions sponsor and/or supervise sports clubs, and that the designated recreation hours are allocated after scheduling needs for varsity athletics, physical education, intramurals, and sports clubs have been met. In addition, many intramural departments employ student activity managers to handle equipment and oversee intramural activities. (The report includes statistical tables of individual responses for these items. (DMT)

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NEW DIRECTIONS IN INTRAMURALS AND RECREATION

By
Louis A. Fabian

Every member of an institution of higher education should be provided an opportunity to enjoy satisfying experiences related to their particular interest in sports and recreation. Thus, the 1970's brought with it expanded intramural, sport club, and recreational offerings for students, faculty, and staff. These increased offerings have necessitated increased funds, greater staff responsibility, changes within the administrative structure, and policy directives of intramural programs. Earlier studies by Fabian and Ross (1) and Fabian et. el. (2) have identified several trends occurring within intramural programs nationally; among these are: trends concerning administration, financing, scope of responsibility, and supervision of activity within college intramural programs. In addition, this survey examined the priority of recreation within the scheme of our profession. This particular investigation attempted to verify and further delineate the above trends.

Surveys were mailed to 395 colleges and universities on November 7, 1975. Close-out date for the survey was January 5, 1976. As of that date, 223 surveys were received and used for statistical analysis. The 56.6% return supplied an adequate number of responses. The number of responses varied for each question because not all questions were applicable to every institution.

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Administering and Financing of Intramural Programs

Fabian et. el. (2) found a majority of intramural programs were administered by physical education and/or athletic departments, however, funding for intramural programs came primarily from student related sources. For the purposes of this survey the above finding will be labeled Trend I.

Table I, below, divided by population increments of 5,000, shows the responses to Trend I.

TABLE I

Intramural Administration and Financing

Intramural Population		0-5,000	5,001-10,000	10,001-15,000	15,001 20,000	20,001 25,000	25,001 30,000	30,001-Above	TOTAL
Responses to Trend I	YES	22	44	27	14	9	7	4	127
	NO	32	16	20	9	2	5	12	96
TOTAL		54	60	47	23	11	12	16	223

Table I revealed 57% (127) of the survey population agreed that Trend I was an accurate description of their administrative and funding structure. Contrary to the above finding, 32 schools less than 5,000 and 12 schools over 30,000 reported Trend I was not an accurate description of their structure. This represents 63% (44) of the institutions within these two population ranges. Further data revealed institutions less than 5,000 tend to be singularly structured, i.e., administered and funded solely by Physical Education or Student Affairs, while universities over 30,000 tend to be complexly structured, i.e., administered by two departments and/or funded by two or more sources.

Schools responding No to Trend I were asked to explain their structure. Examination of these responses by population level revealed a bimodal distribution. Institutions below 15,000 in population were administered by physical education and athletics and funded by physical education and athletics, university general funds, and state appropriations in 73.1% (49) of the cases. Institutions above 15,000 in population were funded by student related sources and governed by student affairs, student associations, Dean of Students, or recreation in 65.5% (19) of the cases.

Lastly, of the schools whose structure differed from that described, only 5.2% (5) stated they intended to alter their structure in the future.

Administrative Responsibility of Intramural Departments

Fabian and Ross (1) found a majority of intramural departments supply structured activity, administer sport clubs, and oversee recreation for their populations. This survey found intramural departments provided structured activity at 100% (223) of the institutions, and administered recreation at 73.1% (163).

Table II, below, shows responses to Trend II; specifically regarding sport clubs.

TABLE II

Supervision of Sports Clubs

Intramural Population		0-5,000	5,001-10,000	10,001-15,000	15,001-20,000	20,001-25,000	25,001-30,000	30,001-Above	TOTAL
Intramural Departments Administer Sports Clubs	YES	9	18	30	17	6	6	10	96
	NO	45	42	17	6	5	6	7	127
TOTAL		54	60	47	23	11	12	16	223

Table II indicates 43% (96) of the intramural departments administered sports clubs. Examination of population levels revealed; intramural departments in schools less than 10,000 administered sports clubs in 23.7% (27) of the cases, while intramural departments in schools over 10,000 supervised sports clubs in 63.3% (69) of the cases.

The discrepency between this study's finding and that found by Fabian and Ross (1) may be attributed to their survey sample not including institutions less than 5,000 in population, while 24.2% (54) of this survey's responses came from schools under 5,000 population.

In addition to the responsibilities already discussed, some intramural departments administer intercollegiate athletics for males and females, cheerleading, community recreation, and graduate programs in intramural administration. Finally, some schools supply special interest features not usually a part of most intramural programs, those being: counseling of recreation and leisure activities, maintenance of facilities, fitness programs for faculty and staff, wheelchair athletic programs, recreational clubs, arts and crafts center, and providing recreation for conventions and seminars.

Supervision of Intramural Activities

Fabian et. el. (2) found a majority of intramural departments employed student activity managers to handle equipment and oversee intramural activities. In fact, 85.2% (190) of this survey's reporting institutions indicated this was their policy. Of the 33 schools which currently do not employ student activity managers, 33% (11) indicated they intend to do so in the near future. Student activity managers were responsible for distribution, observation and collection of equipment for participants at 90.6% (171) of the institutions, while 84.2% (160) of the schools reported student activity managers assumed these responsibilities for officials as well.

Whether or not student activity managers should officiate contests has been a controversial subject at many institutions. The controversy appears to center around student activity managers effectively operating activity sites while officiating contests. Of 190 institutions reporting, 28.4% (54) indicated that student activity managers almost always officiated contests, 32.6% (62) officiated sometimes as substitutes or alternates, and 39% (74) very rarely officiated contests. At 81.1% (154) of the institutions, student activity managers maintained operation of activity sites, whether or not a member of the Intramural staff was present.

Schools reporting additional duties, indicated activity managers assume responsibility for an entire sports activity, i.e., scheduling of contests, training, scheduling and payment of officials, recording of scores, and awarding of points. Some schools reported student activity managers also work within the intramural office, their duties including: scheduling of facilities, preparing weekly newsletter, publicity, and answering telephones.

Recreation's Place in Our Profession

Fabian et. el. (2) found many institutions designated recreation hours to avoid conflict with varsity athletics, physical education, intramurals, and sports clubs: Fabian and Ross (1) found recreational activity time was scheduled after the needs of the above were satisfied. Of the 210 colleges and universities answering Trend IV, 79.9% (166) indicated recreation was last on their list of priorities for scheduling of facilities. One school reported male and female athletics had virtually taken over their facilities from intramurals, sports clubs and recreation; while another school indicated recreation ranked after concerts, lectures, meetings, and high school events.

Of the 44 institutions indicating the above trend was an inaccurate description of their policies, 39 reported: recreation had separate facilities, was of equal importance with other activities, had recreational time allotted during peak hours, or merely occupied a higher position on their priority list.

SUMMARY

Generally speaking, a majority of intramural programs are administered by physical education and/or athletics, while funding for intramural programs comes primarily from student related sources. Most intramural departments supply structured activity, oversee recreation, and coordinate the use of athletic facilities, while less than half administer sports clubs. In addition, many intramural departments employ student activity managers to handle equipment and oversee intramural activities, whether or not a member of the intramural staff is present. Finally, recreation is last on most institutions' lists of priorities for facility use.

Bibliography

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